

# Local Authorities and the Private Rented Sector:

## Improvement Toolkit



# Contact

## Welsh Local Government Association

The WLGA's primary purposes are to promote a better local government, its reputation and to support authorities in the development of policies and priorities which will improve public service and democracy.

It represents the 22 local authorities in Wales, with the 4 police authorities, 3 fire and rescue authorities and 3 national park authorities as associate members.

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

In its July 2009 publication *In the eye of the storm*, the Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA) identified improving the quality, and increasing the supply of private rented sector accommodation as one of a number of priority areas in relation to housing. The organisation also notes that, beyond the housing rationale for working with the private rented sector, the community leadership role of local government provides a legitimate foundation for local authorities to undertake such activity.

For the purposes of this toolkit, the private rented sector is defined as homes rented at market rents, ie it does not include homes let at intermediate rents.

The private rented sector is an essential part of the housing market, facilitating labour mobility and providing housing choice. It is also a sector which is increasingly being called on to house people on lower incomes and with support needs, as well as those who, on the face of it, are able to afford home ownership, but are currently unable to access mortgage finance.

As with any housing tenure, the quality of accommodation and its management

are vital; some of the poorest and most vulnerable households live in the poorest quality and poorest managed private rented sector homes.

A central theme of WLGA's work on housing is improvement; doing more for less, doing things differently, increasing the focus on collaboration, increasing efficiency and effectiveness and recognising the need to make better use of existing resources in the context of significant pressure on public finances.

This service improvement toolkit was developed by the Welsh Local Government Association during 2010 through a project steering group which worked with independent housing consultant Tamsin Stirling. Project steering group members are listed in Appendix 1. Those authorities represented on the steering group informed all aspects of the toolkit and piloted the initial diagnostic. In addition, a baseline survey of local authority activity in relation to working with the private rented sector was undertaken in October 2010 which generated information to inform section 5 of this toolkit.

## CONTEXT

This toolkit was developed in the context of:



an increasing awareness of the role of the private rented sector as an important part of local housing markets;



pressures on public sector investment which will increase in the coming years and will prompt further consideration of private rented sector housing options to meet housing need;



proposals for significant changes to housing and welfare benefits systems, including the increase of the single room rent applying to those up to the age of 35 which will push more single people into living in multiple occupancy dwellings;



the aim for every local authority to have a housing options website which includes comprehensive information on the local private rented sector as part of the welsh housing website project;



the opportunity for collaboration between local authorities in relation to developing approaches to working with the private rented sector and sharing effective practice; and



good practice that already exists in parts of Wales in relation to joint working between local authorities, private sector landlords and other partners.

## IMPROVEMENT IN THREE AREAS

The aim of this toolkit is to assist local government improvement in three areas:

- 1** **Raising awareness** across local government of the potential of a well-functioning private rented sector in delivering on a range of local government priorities, as well as providing value for money. The key aim will be to get the private rented sector on the corporate agenda;
- 2** **Generating a more strategic and co-ordinated approach to the private rented sector** across the range of departments/teams who work directly with private sector landlords including environmental health, housing strategy, homelessness, Housing Benefit and Supporting People; and
- 3** **Supporting improvement of the different departments** within each authority that work with the private rented sector.

## THREE SETS OF MATERIALS

In order to achieve this aim, the toolkit comprises 3 sets of materials:



**Awareness raising materials** (section 3) - a set of generic materials that can be used within any local authority to raise the profile of the private rented sector, with officers and/or members. These can be supplemented with local authority-specific information, with 3 options provided within the materials which local authorities can complete:

- factual information about the private rented sector;
- why the private rented sector is an important part of the local housing market; and
- what the authority is already doing in relation to working with the private rented sector and where things could be improved.



**Initial diagnostic** (section 4) - a straightforward diagnostic that can be completed by relevant service leads to gain a holistic picture of where the authority is in relation to its work with the private rented sector. This section of the toolkit will generate discussion between service leads and identify areas for improvement.



**'MOT' and resources** (section 5) - a checklist for each of the ten areas covered in the initial diagnostic linked to practice examples from Wales and beyond, to information generated by the baseline survey, as well as a list of relevant websites and publications.

In addition, a pro-forma **powerpoint presentation** is included at Appendix 2 for local authorities to use and adapt as they see fit as part of their service improvement work on the private rented sector.

## 2. USING THIS TOOLKIT

Piloting of the initial diagnostic took place in July and August 2010. The discussions generated within the pilot authorities by completing the initial diagnostic were useful and in many cases stimulated further joint working between departments and teams.

Learning points from the piloting process included:



The need for a senior officer to champion the use of the toolkit - the steering group concluded that this should be a head of service, e.g. the Head of Housing, the Head of Environmental Health, Head of Housing Benefit etc



The need to ensure all relevant service leads participate in the initial diagnostic - it may be appropriate to use the generic awareness raising materials to

emphasise the relevance of a range of service areas to a well functioning and good quality private rented sector



The need for sufficient time to be allocated to the meeting that is part of the initial diagnostic

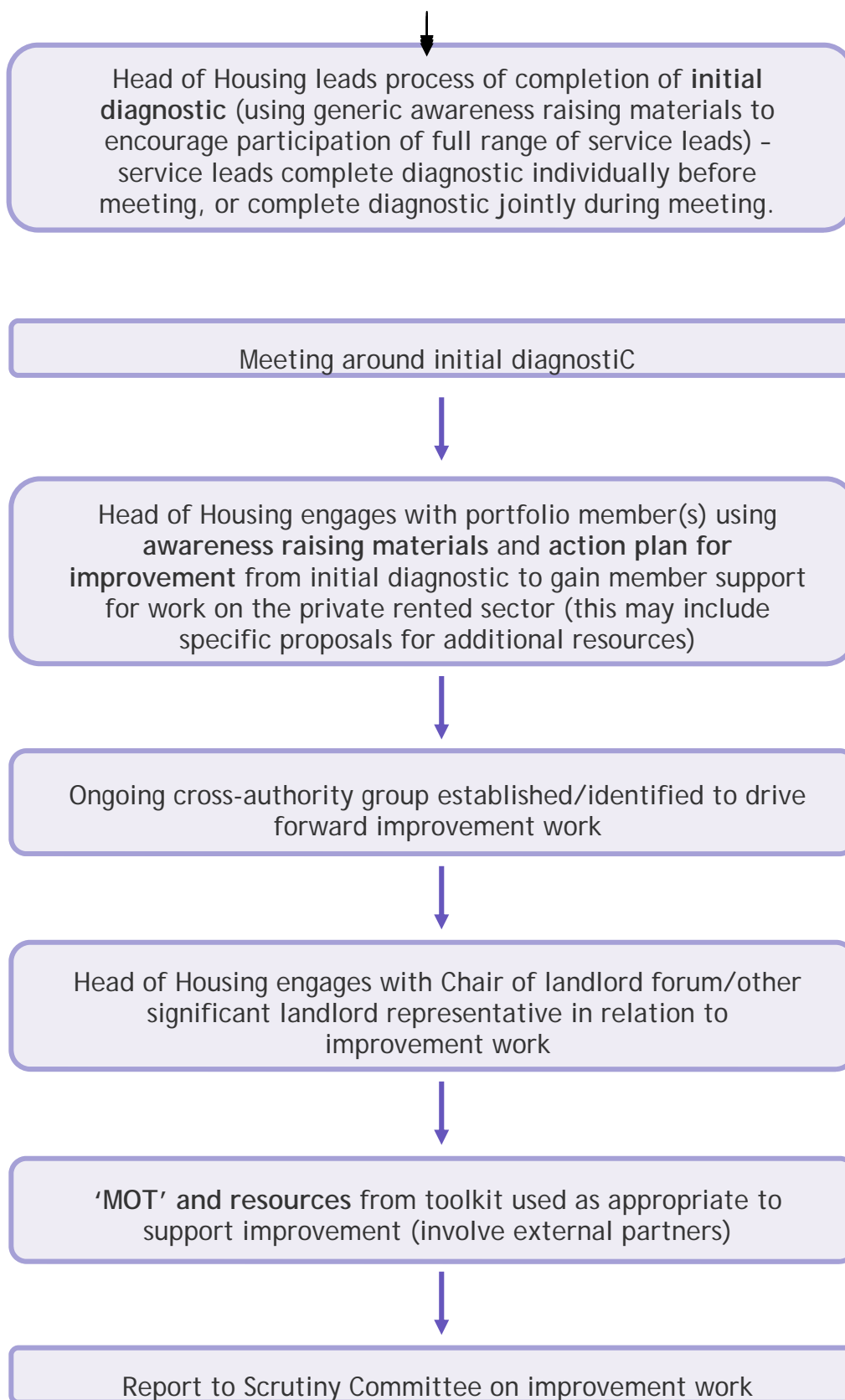


That it may be appropriate for 2 or more of the teams identified at the start of the initial diagnostic, whose working relationship needs to be improved to complete the diagnostic (rather than all the teams identified).

The materials contained in the toolkit can be used in different ways to suit the needs of individual local authorities. However, an example of how the materials might be used is set out below.



## USING THE IMPROVEMENT TOOLKIT



### 3. AWARENESS RAISING MATERIALS

#### Private Rented Sector Housing:

Why does it need corporate attention from local authorities?

#### SOME FACTS



12% of homes across Wales are in the private rented sector, a higher percentage than council housing. This is an average figure; the percentage of homes in the private rented sector in individual local authority areas varies significantly (1)



In this respect, Wales is not typical of many European countries, e.g. in France, around a fifth of the housing is in the private rented sector and in Germany nearly half (2)



A recent report notes that, if trends in shifts in housing tenure continue, the private rented sector could become larger than the council and housing association sectors added together within a few years (3)



The private rented sector has an important role in meeting housing need. For example, it is often the main or first tenure for students and young professionals, but can also provide a sustainable home for many other households, including vulnerable people and those facing homelessness (4)



The private rented sector is a sector of choice for many households, including those who have lived in the social sector. 30% of private rented sector households who had moved from the social sector to the private rented sector had done so to move to a 'better neighbourhood or more pleasant area' (5)



The Welsh Assembly Government wants the private rented sector to play a role in meeting the needs of people who would otherwise be homeless (6)



Some of the poorest housing conditions in Wales are in the private rented sector (7). Recent research indicates that around 40,000 households in the private rented sector are sharing and over 4,000 households are overcrowded (of the total of around 137,000 households living in the private rented sector in Wales) (8)

### 3. AWARENESS RAISING MATERIALS

Private Rented Sector Housing:  
Why does it need corporate attention from local authorities?

#### SOME FACTS



The UK Government has decided not to implement many of the recommendations of a recent review of the private rented sector, a number of which applied to Wales (9). This means that emphasis will remain on local authorities to ensure that the private rented sector in their area is of good quality and well-managed



The Welsh Local Government Association has identified improving the quality, and increasing the supply, of private rented sector accommodation as one of a number of priority areas in relation to housing (10)



Although the common perception is that most private rented sector landlords do not look after their properties or tenants well, there are many landlords who provide good quality accommodation and manage it effectively

Ensuring a good quality and well-managed private rented sector does not just have benefits for housing departments; it also has the potential to deliver on a range of local government priorities, as well as providing value for money.

# BENEFITS OF A GOOD QUALITY AND WELL-MANAGED PRIVATE RENTED SECTOR

## The private rented sector and health and social care

A good quality and well-managed private rented sector will:

- reduce the number of hospital admissions such as those due to falls or excess cold;
- reduce the cost of medical diagnosis, treatment and care, eg in relation to conditions associated with damp and mould growth; and
- improve the well-being and quality of life of tenants, reducing the need for social care services.

## The private rented sector and tackling child poverty

A good quality and well-managed private rented sector will:

- contribute to the core aim of a safe home and community within Children and Young People's Plans;
- reduce the number of children living in overcrowded conditions that impact adversely on their educational attainment;
- reduce the number of children living in dangerous or hazardous conditions; and
- reduce the number of children living in households that experience fuel poverty.

## The private rented sector and sustainability

A good quality and well-managed private rented sector will:

- contribute to carbon reduction targets;
- contribute to environmental quality; and
- reduce the number of households living in fuel poverty.

## The private rented sector and regeneration

A good quality and well-managed private rented sector will:

- play a role in physical regeneration, eg through bringing flats above shops back into use, and improving physical environments;
- play a role in tackling social exclusion, eg through improving quality of life and well-being of tenants; and

play a role in community cohesion and sustainability, eg through effective management of tenancies and ensuring anti-social behaviour and nuisance is tackled promptly and managing.

## The private rented sector and meeting housing need

A good quality and well-managed private rented sector will:

- play an essential role in the housing market, facilitating labour mobility and providing housing choice;
- provide a range of housing options for households at different stages in their lives;
- enable people ready to move on from supported housing projects and temporary housing to do so freeing up space for those who need it; and
- enable empty homes to be brought back into use.

## The private rented sector and preventing and tackling homelessness

A good quality and well-managed private rented sector will:

- reduce levels of homelessness through lower numbers of evictions and cases of harassment;
- reduce the costs of temporary accommodation by lowering the use of high cost bed and breakfast; and
- provide local authorities with an alternative means of discharging their homelessness duties, (with the agreement of the individual/head of household), which is important given the shortage of council and housing association accommodation.

## The private rented sector and Supporting People

A good quality and well-managed private rented sector will:

- provide options for people ready to move on from supported housing projects, increasing the value for money provided by these projects;
- provide homes within which floating support can be provided to vulnerable people;
- Taking a strategic and co-ordinated approach to the private rented sector, working across departments and teams, will have benefits at a corporate level, enabling local authorities to meet corporate priorities and achieve value for money; and
- developing partnerships with the private rented sector: potential to deliver.

## REFERENCES

1. *SDR 50/20/10 Dwelling Stock Estimates 2008-09*, Welsh Assembly Government, 2009
2. *Investment in the UK private rented sector*, HM Treasury, 2010
3. *Housing Trends in the UK Housing System: will the private rented sector continue to grow?* Building and Social Housing Foundation, 2010
4. *New Directions for Renting: a new vision for the private rented sector*, Crisis/National Landlords Association, 2009
5. *Rugg Review*, Centre for Housing Policy, University of York, 2009
6. As 1
7. *Living in Wales Survey*, Welsh Assembly Government 2004
8. *Housing need and demand in Wales 2006-2026*, Welsh Assembly Government 2010
9. *Shapps promise to landlords: no more red tape*, Communities and Local Government press release 10 June 2010
10. *In the eye of the storm*, Welsh Local Government Association, 2009

## LOCAL FACTS

The project steering group considered that it may be useful to supplement the overall awareness raising materials with information about the private rented sector at a local level. 3 options are set out below; local authorities can choose between these as to which will enable the most effective messages to be conveyed to the relevant officers/members (or indeed use them together).

### Option 1: Factual information about the PRS

Information	Source
PRS as proportion of the homes in the area	Welsh Housing Stats/local housing market assessments
Number of PRS properties in the area	Welsh Housing Stats/local housing market assessments
Number of PRS landlords and lettings agents in the area	Rent Officers Wales/local authority records
LHA levels	Rent Officers Wales
Amount of Housing Benefit paid out on PRS lets during the last year	HB department
Number of enforcement actions taken by the local authority in relation to PRS properties in the last year	Environmental Health department
Number of homelessness cases where the duty was discharged into the PRS in the last year	Homelessness/housing options team
Number of cases where homelessness was prevented through the use of the PRS	Homelessness/housing options team

## Option 2: Why the PRS is an important element of the local housing market

Information	Source
PRS as proportion of the homes in the area	Welsh Housing Stats/local housing market assessments
Number of PRS properties in the area	Welsh Housing Stats/local housing market assessments
Average house price/earning ratio	Hometrack
Number on waiting list/common housing register	Housing options
Number of homeless presentations	Housing options
Number of lettings in the social housing sector	Housing strategy



**Option 3:** What is already happening in relation to the PRS and where things could be improved - this information can be drawn directly from the initial diagnostic meeting

Area	What is already being done?	What could be improved?
The PRS at a corporate level		
Working across departments and teams		
Resourcing work with the PRS		
Knowledge of the local PRS		
Communication with PRS landlords		
Support for tenants to sustain PRS tenancies		
Support for PRS landlords		
Improving the quality of the PRS		
Improving access to the PRS		
Collaboration with other local authorities		

## 4. INITIAL DIAGNOSTIC AND GUIDANCE

The first step is to identify an individual to lead the diagnostic process. It is suggested that a head of service takes this role which will include encouraging the relevant service leads to take part, chairing the meeting at which those taking part will discuss their views and experiences and ensuring momentum is maintained after the meeting to take forward the agreed areas for improvement. This could be the Head of Housing, but may be the Head of Environmental Health, Head of Housing Benefit etc.

The head of service will ask service leads in the following teams within the local authority to complete this diagnostic:

- Environmental Health - private sector enforcement/landlord liaison;
- Private Sector Housing Renewal;
- Housing Benefit;
- Housing Strategy;
- Homelessness/Housing Advice/Housing Options;
- Supporting People; and
- Others as appropriate - those who have a direct working relationship with private rented sector landlords (eg Trading Standards and Building Control, Small Business Support).

either separately or working as a group.

The idea is to score the authority against each of the 10 issues set out (by deleting the traffic light symbols that are not relevant):



score **green** if you think your local authority's performance in relation to the statement is largely positive, with minor areas for improvement only;



score **amber** if you think there is a mixed picture, with some positive areas, but also some major areas for improvement; or



score **red** if you think performance is largely negative, with significant areas for improvement and no major areas of strength.

Try to consider your view about the authority's overall approach to the private rented sector as well as that taken by your team.

In the *Why this answer/evidence* column, summarise the main reasons, highlighting particularly positive and/or negative examples/issues. When doing this, think about evidence that may be available such as key statistics, feedback from landlords, comparison with other authorities (quantitative and/or qualitative) and what

information is available about outcomes as well as processes.







If you are completing the form on an individual basis, you will be asked to bring your completed form to a meeting arranged by the head of service. This meeting will enable those completing the forms to compare experiences and perspectives across the teams/service areas and to identify initial areas for improvement.

If you are completing the diagnostic working as a group, the head of Service will arrange a meeting at which the form can be completed collectively.

Whichever approach is taken, the aim is to agree:

- an initial assessment about the authority's work with private sector landlords; and
- a small number of areas for improvement.

Name and job title of person completing diagnostic/names and job titles of group of officers completing the diagnostic:		
Date completed:		
Issue	Traffic light	Why this answer/evidence?
1. The local authority recognises the potential of the private rented sector to deliver on corporate objectives and includes relevant actions in high level plans/strategies	000	
2. The local authority works effectively across departments and teams in relation to the private rented sector	000	
3. The local authority puts adequate resources into working with the private rented sector	000	
4. The local authority has good knowledge of the private rented sector in the area (landlords and lettings agents, properties, locations, rents, condition of properties etc)	000	
5. The local authority communicates effectively with private sector landlords (personally, in writing, newsletter, website, consultation, landlord forum, are messages from the authority consistent?)	000	

Issue	Traffic light	Why this answer/evidence?
6. The local authority effectively supports tenants to sustain tenancies in the private rented sector (information, tenant liaison, mediation, dealing with harassment/illegal eviction, access to floating support, access to homelessness prevention fund, maximising spend on discretionary housing payments etc)		
7. The local authority effectively supports landlords (information, training, liaison, dedicated contact point, effective housing benefit processes etc)		
8. The local authority is effective in improving the quality of the private rented sector (strategic interventions to improve quality, incentives, accreditation, enforcement, energy efficiency etc)		
9. The local authority is effective in improving access to the private rented sector (strategic interventions to increase the size of the sector/encourage new entrants, bond scheme, private rented sector access scheme, appropriate partnership working outside the authority, etc)		
10. The local authority takes opportunities to collaborate with other local authorities on work around the private rented sector		
11. Any other comments/ observations:		

Bringing the diagnoses together- to be completed by the head of service leading the process during the meeting if forms are completed individually by service leads (this will not be needed if the diagnosis is undertaken collectively at the meeting)

Issue	Environ mental health	Private sector housing renewal	HB	Housing strategy	Homeless/ Housing options/ Housing advice	SP	Other	Gaps/ issues
1. The local authority recognises the potential of the private rented sector to deliver on corporate objectives and includes relevant actions in high level plans/strategies								
2. The local authority works effectively across departments and teams in relation to the private rented sector								
3. The local authority puts adequate resources into working with the private rented sector								
4. The local authority has good knowledge of the private rented sector in the area								
5. The local authority communicates effectively with private sector landlords								

Issue	Environ mental health	Private sector housing renewal	HB	Housing strategy	Homeless ness/ Housing options/ Housing advice	SP	Other	Gaps/ issues
6. The local authority effectively supports tenants to sustain tenancies in the private rented sector								
7. The local authority effectively supports landlords								
8. The local authority is effective in improving the quality of the private rented sector								
9. The local authority is effective in improving access to the private rented sector								
10. The local authority takes opportunities to collaborate with other local authorities on work around the private rented sector								

## Agreed areas for improvement

[illegible]



## 5. TAKING THINGS FURTHER: 'MOT' AND RESOURCES

For each of the ten areas identified in the initial diagnostic, a simple set of statements is set out below against which local authorities can assess their current practice. In addition, links to practice examples are provided for each area. These were identified through the baseline survey of Welsh local authorities undertaken in October 2010 and a websearch. A summary of what Welsh local authorities indicated they are doing in relation to their work with the private rented sector as at October 2010 is provided on pages 36-45 (taken from the baseline survey). Lastly a list of relevant websites and publications is set out on pages 46-49.

### Area 1:

The local authority recognises the potential of the private rented sector to deliver on corporate objectives and includes relevant actions in high level plans/strategies

#### Our authority can demonstrate that:

- relevant cabinet members have been briefed about the private rented sector, its characteristics, importance and potential to deliver on a range of corporate objectives;
- relevant corporate directors have been briefed about the private rented sector, its characteristics, importance and potential to deliver on a range of corporate objectives;
- the relevant Scrutiny Committee has looked at how the authority works with the private rented sector, or is planning to do so; and
- actions to grow and improve the quality of the private rented sector and its potential to meet housing need feature in relevant plans and strategies, eg Children and Young People's Plan.

The steering group will be interested to see how work develops in this area and will re-view practice in mid 2011.

## Area 2:

The local authority works effectively across departments and teams in relation to the private rented sector

### Our authority can demonstrate that:

- an identifiable group to lead cross-authority work on the private rented sector is in place;
- all relevant teams within the local authority recognise their role in enabling access to the private rented sector for low income households (Environmental Health – private sector enforcement/landlord liaison, Private Sector Housing Renewal, Housing Benefit, Housing Strategy, Homelessness/Housing Advice/Housing Options, Supporting People, Trading Standards and Building Control);
- there is consistency in the approach to advising, assisting, educating, supporting and enforcing against landlords across all the relevant teams/service areas;
- housing, Benefits and Finance work together to ensure that rent deposits and rent in advance are available at the front line to help low income households gain accommodation in the private rented sector, including the use of Discretionary Housing Payments as rent in advance;
- cross-departmental work is underway to examine and tackle the impacts of welfare reform and housing benefit reform;
- cross-departmental work is underway to respond to/tackle the proposed changes to Local Housing Allowance; and
- protocols or other mechanisms are in place to enable appropriate sharing of information across the authority.

## PRACTICE EXAMPLES

**Cardiff County Council** has recently established a cross-corporate authority group which includes representatives from housing strategy, housing benefit, the housing advice unit and private sector housing. One of the aims of the group is to ensure a consistent message is portrayed across all service areas.

[matthew.lord@cardiff.gov.uk](mailto:matthew.lord@cardiff.gov.uk)

**Flintshire County Council's** Community Support Services Manager and Housing Options Team have undertaken work on changes to housing benefit and local housing allowance to raise awareness of the issues and contribute to mitigation strategies.

[David.Humphreys@flintshire.gov.uk](mailto:David.Humphreys@flintshire.gov.uk)

**Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council's** Local Housing Partnership Group includes all relevant stakeholders that operate within the PRS and a range of local authority teams including planning, housing options and estates. The chair of the landlord forum is a member of the Local Housing Partnership. The authority has also established a specific internal group to work on the PRS which will take forward PRS issues as part of a Local Housing Strategy Review in 2011.

Claire Jones [s.c.jones@npt.gov.uk](mailto:s.c.jones@npt.gov.uk)

**Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council** has a quarterly meeting of all services with a housing remit including

housing strategy, housing enforcement, housing advice and homelessness prevention, supporting people, private sector housing grants, area regeneration and housing benefit. More recently, monthly meetings of these services have been held to develop an action plan/strategy to deal with the impact of proposed housing benefit changes.

[Louise.M.Davies@rctcbc.gov.uk](mailto:Louise.M.Davies@rctcbc.gov.uk)

**Torfaen County Borough Council** has a group focused on empty properties involving both 'Housing Strategy, Social Care and Housing' and 'Planning and Public Protection' Departments.

[John.clements@torfaen.gov.uk](mailto:John.clements@torfaen.gov.uk)

**City and County of Swansea** established a group to undertake the pilot of the initial diagnostic with representatives from homelessness, housing benefit, environmental health and housing strategy, along with The Wallich.

[Peter.Williams@swansea.gov.uk](mailto:Peter.Williams@swansea.gov.uk)

**Wrexham County Borough Council** developed a private rented sector improvement strategy which runs from 2009-12. As part of its implementation, the authority established a private rented sector working group involving internal (public protection, planning, and environment) and external partners (Shelter, National Landlords Association, Rent Officers and Glyndwr University). The group meets four times a year.

[rhys.horan@wrexham.gov.uk](mailto:rhys.horan@wrexham.gov.uk)

## Area 3:

The local authority puts adequate resources into working with the private rented sector

Our authority can demonstrate that:

- The resources invested into working with the private rented sector are proportionate to its role in the local housing market
- Housing, Benefits and Finance services work to ensure that the resources are available to front line staff for people threatened with homelessness
- Discretionary Housing Payments are strategically targeted and the allocation fully utilised each year

## PRACTICE EXAMPLES

**Cardiff Council** considers Discretionary Housing Payments to be a strategic tool in enabling access to, and sustaining tenancies within the private rented sector. £265,000 was paid out in 2009/10 and this will increase in 2010/11.

[KWhite@cardiff.gov.uk](mailto:KWhite@cardiff.gov.uk)

**Liverpool City Council** is working in partnership with the Primary Care Trust on a Healthy Homes Programme which will involve officers visiting 15,000 private rented properties over a three year period. Areas with the greatest health issues are being visited first, and information gathered about the occupants and their health needs, as well as the condition of their homes. In its first year, the Programme reached 5,000 homes and by working with landlords secured over £1.3million investment in improving property conditions. [www.liverpool.gov.uk/Environment/Environmental\\_health/healthyhomes/index.asp](http://www.liverpool.gov.uk/Environment/Environmental_health/healthyhomes/index.asp)

## Area 4:

The local authority has good knowledge of the private rented sector in the area

Our authority can demonstrate that:

- We know the majority of the private sector landlords who own properties in our area
- We know details of the lettings agents operating in our area
- We have an up to date database of private rented sector properties, including locations, rents and condition of properties
- We maintain this database bringing together information from across the local authority
- We have information about empty properties which could be brought back into use as private rented sector homes

## PRACTICE EXAMPLES

Cardiff County Council is in the process of merging relevant databases from different service areas.

[matthew.lord@cardiff.gov.uk](mailto:matthew.lord@cardiff.gov.uk)

Carmarthenshire County Council has a database of landlords and lettings agents which enables the authority to contact them as well as tracking activity in relation to each landlord/agent.

[GaJWilliams@carmarthenshire.gov.uk](mailto:GaJWilliams@carmarthenshire.gov.uk)

Ceredigion County Council uses geographical information system to enable easy identification of long-term

empty properties – questionnaires are then sent and dialogue established to encourage the owners to bring the properties back into use.

Alan Davies, [alandav@ceredigion.gov.uk](mailto:alandav@ceredigion.gov.uk)

Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council offers grants to landlords to refurbish empty flats above shops which are then offered to the council for nominations for up to five years and used to assist the council to discharge legal duties to single homeless people.

[Louise.M.Davies@rctcbc.gov.uk](mailto:Louise.M.Davies@rctcbc.gov.uk)

## Area 5:

The local authority communicates effectively with private sector landlords

Our authority can demonstrate that:

- We provide private sector landlords with consistent messages from all parts of the authority
- We have effective personal communication with private sector landlords
- We have a private sector landlords newsletter which receives positive feedback from landlords (or use the LAW newsletter)
- We have a well-attended landlord forum of which landlords can influence the agenda
- Our website has dedicated pages for private rented sector landlords which are kept up to date
- Our website signposts private sector landlords to [www.welshlandlords.org.uk](http://www.welshlandlords.org.uk) and other relevant websites
- We use our local authority's element of the welshhousing website as an opportunity to provide information about PRS properties and their availability
- We consult private sector landlords as appropriate on proposals to

## PRACTICE EXAMPLES

**Caerphilly County Borough Council** - web-pages outline the initiatives undertaken by the authority - private sector leasing, social lettings etc and also provide information on grants, licensing etc.

[www.caerphilly.gov.uk/housing](http://www.caerphilly.gov.uk/housing) - click on private housing

**Caerphilly County Borough Council** facilitates and hosts well attended quarterly landlord meetings and an annual landlord fair with support from the National Landlords Association,

Senior Housing and Housing Benefits Managers and the Cabinet Member for Housing.

Sue Cousins [cousis@caerphilly.gov.uk](mailto:cousis@caerphilly.gov.uk)

**Cardiff Council** ensures a Cardiff-based story is included in each issue of the Landlord Accreditation Wales newsletter which is widely distributed to a range of contacts and is available on relevant web-pages ([www.cardiff.gov.uk/privaterent](http://www.cardiff.gov.uk/privaterent)).

[ARowland@cardiff.gov.uk](mailto:ARowland@cardiff.gov.uk)

**Carmarthenshire County Council** has a landlords' forum which is chaired by a

local managing agent. Meetings are held in the evenings and are attended by all relevant teams within the local authority as well as guest speakers.

[GaJWilliams@carmarthenshire.gov.uk](mailto:GaJWilliams@carmarthenshire.gov.uk)

Ceredigion County Council has made an energy efficiency presentation to its landlord forum.

[Keith.Davies@ceredigion.gov.uk](mailto:Keith.Davies@ceredigion.gov.uk)

Denbighshire County Council launched its twice-yearly landlord newsletter in July 2010. *Landlord Update* covers local issues affecting landlords as well as national topics. The newsletter complements the work of the landlord forum and helps the authority engage with hard to reach landlords who live some distance from their rental properties. *Landlord Update* is distributed with the landlord forum invitation letter to save on postal costs and is online at [www.denbighshire.gov.uk/en-gb/DNAP-76RD3V](http://www.denbighshire.gov.uk/en-gb/DNAP-76RD3V)

[Glesni.owen@denbighshire.gov.uk](mailto:Glesni.owen@denbighshire.gov.uk)

Gateshead Council's private rented sector web-pages [www.gateshead.gov.uk/Housing/helpsupportadvice/PrivateLandlords/home.aspx](http://www.gateshead.gov.uk/Housing/helpsupportadvice/PrivateLandlords/home.aspx)

Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council's web-pages for private landlords [www.npt.gov.uk/Default.aspx?page=3251](http://www.npt.gov.uk/Default.aspx?page=3251)

Newport City Council has a well established landlords' forum which meets quarterly [www.newport.gov.uk/\\_dc/index.cfm?fuseaction=environmentalhealth.homepage&contentid=CONT263426](http://www.newport.gov.uk/_dc/index.cfm?fuseaction=environmentalhealth.homepage&contentid=CONT263426)

The chair of Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council's landlord forum is a member of the Strategic Local Housing Partnership Group.

[Louise.M.Davies@rctcbc.gov.uk](mailto:Louise.M.Davies@rctcbc.gov.uk)

The front page of Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council's website has a direct link to the pages for private sector landlords [www.rhondda-cynon-taff.gov.uk/en/home.aspx](http://www.rhondda-cynon-taff.gov.uk/en/home.aspx)

Torfaen County Borough Council, Monmouthshire and Blaenau Gwent are trialling a merger of their respective landlord forums.

[John.clements@torfaen.gov.uk](mailto:John.clements@torfaen.gov.uk),  
[NiaChappell@monmouthshire.gov.uk](mailto:NiaChappell@monmouthshire.gov.uk)  
[owain.roberts@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk](mailto:owain.roberts@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk)

Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council - example of producing a private sector landlords magazine [www.lacors.gov.uk/lacors/ContentDetails.aspx?authCode=390896F&id=22891](http://www.lacors.gov.uk/lacors/ContentDetails.aspx?authCode=390896F&id=22891)

City and County of Swansea's web-pages for private sector landlords [www.swansea.gov.uk/index.cfm?articleid=6598](http://www.swansea.gov.uk/index.cfm?articleid=6598)

Wrexham County Borough Council's web-pages for private sector landlords [www.wrexham.gov.uk/english/council/Housing/private\\_landlord.htm](http://www.wrexham.gov.uk/english/council/Housing/private_landlord.htm) include clear information about past and forthcoming landlord forum meetings.

## Area 6: The local authority effectively supports tenants to sustain tenancies in the private rented sector

Our authority can demonstrate that:

Relevant information is provided to people who are going to move into private rented sector tenancies, eg by means of a tenants information pack

Information specifically on housing benefit and the responsibility to pay rent is provided to tenants

Pre-tenancy work/support is available for people who are going to move into private rented sector tenancies

Private rented sector tenants are able to access floating support

Private rented sector tenants are able to access appropriate mediation services if they have problems with their landlord

Private rented sector tenants are able to access a tenant liaison officer if they experience problems in relation to their tenancy

We take action against incidents of harassment and illegal eviction by private sector landlords

Private rented sector tenants can access homeless prevention funds when needed

Consideration has been given to a dedicated homeless prevention fund for private rented sector tenants

We spend at least 100% of our allocation for discretionary housing payments each year

We increase the amount spent on discretionary housing payments year on year



## PRACTICE EXAMPLES

Caerphilly County Borough Council has established a task and finish group on discretionary housing payments which has decided to focus DHPs on care leavers and those who have already left care, are living in the private rented sector and are about to reach their 22<sup>nd</sup> birthday. Supporting People have provided an additional £10,000 to the DHP pot to facilitate more spending. Sue Cousins [cousis@caerphilly.gov.uk](mailto:cousis@caerphilly.gov.uk)

Cardiff County Council has developed a leaflet - *renting privately: information for tenants* and a pack and a website for students who rent ([www.cardiffdigs.co.uk](http://www.cardiffdigs.co.uk)). [kmccann@cardiff.gov.uk](mailto:kmccann@cardiff.gov.uk)

The majority of Conwy County Borough Council's floating support service supports people living in the private rented sector (only 1 of 8 officers works entirely with tenants of social landlords). [debbie.lambe@conwy.gov.uk](mailto:debbie.lambe@conwy.gov.uk)

Conwy County Borough Council advertises a housing benefit fast track system to customers - they are promised if they bring their completed housing benefit form and all supporting evidence to an Area Benefit Office, the housing benefit claim will be processed within 48 hours. [helen.hobson@conwy.gov.uk](mailto:helen.hobson@conwy.gov.uk)

Denbighshire County Council discharges 30% of statutory homelessness cases in the PRS so sees measures to sustain tenancies as vital. Measures include access to floating support and mediation and a designated housing benefit officer. [Yvonne.hewitt@denbighshire.gov.uk](mailto:Yvonne.hewitt@denbighshire.gov.uk)

Examples of use of discretionary housing payments to prevent homelessness amongst young people from a range of English councils: [www.communities.gov.uk/youthhomelessness/accommodation/moveon/waystopay/casestudy8](http://www.communities.gov.uk/youthhomelessness/accommodation/moveon/waystopay/casestudy8)

Cyngor Gwynedd Council has maximised the use of discretionary housing payments, with the DWP contribution rising from nearly £40,000 in 2006 to over £76,000 in 2010.

Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council has a central access point for all floating support and supported housing services. As part of this approach, support is provided for people moving on from supported housing into the private rented sector for at least six months. [Darran.J.Daye@rctcbc.gov.uk](mailto:Darran.J.Daye@rctcbc.gov.uk)

Torfaen County Borough Council has produced a guide to renting in the private sector [www.torfaen.gov.uk/Housing/PrivateSectorHousing/Publications/AGuideToPrivateSectorRenting.pdf](http://www.torfaen.gov.uk/Housing/PrivateSectorHousing/Publications/AGuideToPrivateSectorRenting.pdf)

As part of its private rented sector improvement work, Wrexham County Borough Council has developed a landlord and tenant charter which outlines landlord and tenant responsibilities [www.wrexham.gov.uk/assets/pdfs/housing/tenants\\_charter/landlord\\_tenant\\_charter.pdf](http://www.wrexham.gov.uk/assets/pdfs/housing/tenants_charter/landlord_tenant_charter.pdf)

## Area 7: The local authority effectively supports landlords

Our authority can demonstrate that:

We provide private sector landlords with appropriate and timely information and advice in relation to their landlord role, including in relation to problems encountered with individual tenancies

We provide relevant training for private sector landlords

We promote the training for private sector landlords provided by Landlord Accreditation Wales

We have well publicised contact points for enquiries from private sector landlords

We assess Housing Benefit claims and make Housing Benefit payments promptly

We provide landlords with a contact within Housing Benefit

Our safeguarding policy for the payment of Local Housing Allowance to landlords reflects up to date guidance and has the aim of sustaining tenancies

We work with our local credit union to enable PRS tenants to have access to accounts

## PRACTICE EXAMPLES

**Barrow Borough Council** has a voluntary tenant passport scheme which aims to encourage private landlords to make more informed choices about the people they rent to, help the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership to identify those private tenants who are vulnerable and/or at higher risk of failing in their tenancy and, to assist both them and landlords accommodating them where possible.

[www.barrowbc.gov.uk/Default.aspx?page=1451](http://www.barrowbc.gov.uk/Default.aspx?page=1451)

**Bristol City Council** has 2 Housing Benefit Officers within its Private Renting Team who provide expert advice (and reassurance) to landlords. The authority has also worked in partnership with neighbouring authorities to develop a landlord manual.

[www.bristol.gov.uk/ccm/content/Housing/Private-Housing/landlord-manual.en](http://www.bristol.gov.uk/ccm/content/Housing/Private-Housing/landlord-manual.en)

**Caerphilly County Borough Council's** Housing Benefit Manager attends private sector landlord meetings, provides advice and updates to landlords and meets with the Chair of the Landlord Forum on request.

Sue Cousins, [cousis@caerphilly.gov.uk](mailto:cousis@caerphilly.gov.uk)

**Cardiff County Council** holds regular landlord open days

([matthew.lord@cardiff.gov.uk](mailto:matthew.lord@cardiff.gov.uk)) and 2 training days per month co-ordinated through Landlord Accreditation Wales. [ARowland@cardiff.gov.uk](mailto:ARowland@cardiff.gov.uk)

**Conwy County Borough Council** provided Housing Benefit training as part of its approved landlord scheme.

[jo.lambe@conwy.gov.uk](mailto:jo.lambe@conwy.gov.uk)

**Edinburgh City Council's** Letwise service provides a wide range of information and advice for private rented sector landlords.

[www.edinburgh.gov.uk/downloads/926/landlords-advice\\_and\\_support](http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/downloads/926/landlords-advice_and_support)

**Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council** has introduced an electronic claims solution which allows claims to be prioritised; in some cases, where all relevant information has been provided, claims have been processed on the day of receipt.

**Torfaen County Borough Council** works jointly with Monmouthshire and Blaenau Gwent to provide training and events for PRS landlords.

[John.clements@torfaen.gov.uk](mailto:John.clements@torfaen.gov.uk),  
[NiaChappell@monmouthshire.gov.uk](mailto:NiaChappell@monmouthshire.gov.uk)  
[owain.roberts@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk](mailto:owain.roberts@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk)

**Wrexham County Borough Council** is planning a landlord and tenant event for March 2011 which is being organised by a sub group of the authority's PRS working group.

[rhys.horan@wrexham.gov.uk](mailto:rhys.horan@wrexham.gov.uk)

**Ynys Mon** provided fire risk assessment training to private sector landlords.

Heulwen Roberts [hrxhp@anglesey.gov.uk](mailto:hrxhp@anglesey.gov.uk)

## Area 8: The local authority is effective in improving the quality of the private rented sector

Our authority can demonstrate that:

We operate an effective licensing scheme(s)

Landlord accreditation is used to improve the quality of the private rented sector and the quality of its management

We use enforcement measures to tackle poor quality private rented sector homes and poor management, including prosecution as appropriate

We provide loans to private sector landlords

We make funding available for energy efficiency work in private rented sector properties

We use opportunities to encourage owners of empty homes to improve and rent their properties

We offer non-refundable incentives to private sector landlords in return for 'nominations'

We achieve the 'good' standard in relation to the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health standards

## PRACTICE EXAMPLES

### **Blaenau Gwent County Borough**

**Council** is working in partnership with a national energy supplier to provide free energy efficiency improvements to homes most likely to be in fuel poverty across all tenures, including the PRS.

[Owain.roberts@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk](mailto:Owain.roberts@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk)

### **Caerphilly County Borough Council**

provides empty property owners with advice and a point of contact to facilitate returning their properties into use through the private rental route.

Landlord improvement grants and loans are available. Energy efficiency improvements are facilitated through liaison with a dedicated officer in partnership with energy efficiency schemes. The private sector leasing properties used for temporary accommodation for homeless service users are sourced from long-term empty properties, brought back into use through advice and, in some cases, through grants to landlords.

Sue Cousins [cousis@caerphilly.gov.uk](mailto:cousis@caerphilly.gov.uk)

**Cardiff Council** takes appropriate prosecutions forward where necessary, including within the first half of 2010, 4 failures to licence a mandatory HMO, 1 failure to comply with mandatory HMO licence condition, and one failure to comply with a s.11 Improvement Notice.

[h.gronow@cardiff.gov.uk](mailto:h.gronow@cardiff.gov.uk)

### **Carmarthenshire County Council**

provides property appreciation loans for landlords where Category 1 hazards are identified, £10,000 loan with nomination rights and £5,000 loan with no nomination rights.

[GaJWilliams@carmarthenshire.gov.uk](mailto:GaJWilliams@carmarthenshire.gov.uk)

### **Flintshire County Council**

targets funding for energy efficiency within the Deeside Housing Renewal Area using Community Energy Saving Programme funding.

[David.Humphreys@flintshire.gov.uk](mailto:David.Humphreys@flintshire.gov.uk)

**Cyngor Gwynedd Council's** additional licensing conditions include a requirement for landlords to be accredited with Landlord Accreditation Wales within the period of the licence.

[CarysFWilliams@gwynedd.gov.uk](mailto:CarysFWilliams@gwynedd.gov.uk)

**Gwynedd's** Here to Help initiative has included private rented sector properties as energy efficiency measures are undertaken in all properties on a ward by ward basis.

[ClareJones@gwynedd.gov.uk](mailto:ClareJones@gwynedd.gov.uk)

**Gwynedd** has made provision of £150,000 per year to fund fire safety precaution measures available to HMO landlords (up to £5,000).

[CarysFWilliams@gwynedd.gov.uk](mailto:CarysFWilliams@gwynedd.gov.uk)

**Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council** developed the first selective licensing scheme in Wales.

Mark Thomas [m.thomas2@npt.gov.uk](mailto:m.thomas2@npt.gov.uk)

Since mid 2009, **Powys County Council** has changed its historical emphasis on grants to the provision of interest free loans. To date £600,000 of loans have been made, recoverable over a 5-year period. Subject to the overall availability of finances, repayable loan finance is available to private sector landlords for works that would constitute a breach in statutory housing, health and safety rating system standards. Applicants are supported through the process by the council's in-house agency service.

[julian.preece@powys.gov.uk](mailto:julian.preece@powys.gov.uk)

**Powys County Council** incentivises participation in the Landlord Accreditation Wales (LAW) scheme by offering £100 discount per property on the standard licence fee for landlords who are accredited through LAW.

[julian.preece@powys.gov.uk](mailto:julian.preece@powys.gov.uk)

**Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council** has developed a grant scheme for owner occupiers and private sector landlords to discount the cost of loft and/or cavity wall insulation.

[Louise.M.Davies@rctcbc.gov.uk](mailto:Louise.M.Davies@rctcbc.gov.uk)

The **City and County of Swansea** has a member of staff within housing who specialises in energy efficiency matters.

[Peter.Williams@swansea.gov.uk](mailto:Peter.Williams@swansea.gov.uk)

## Area 9: The local authority is effective in improving access to the private rented sector

Our authority can demonstrate that:

We have a private sector leasing scheme that works in the context of the local market

A private rented sector access scheme is operating in our area and is linked to priorities in terms of meeting housing need and to opportunities to grow the private rented sector, eg by landlords purchasing property specifically to let through the private rented sector access scheme

Information about schemes that aim to improve access to the private rented sector is on our authority's element of the welshhousing website

Mechanisms to reduce barriers to the private rented sector, eg bond scheme, rent guarantee scheme, are in place and are being used effectively

We are working to ensure our bond scheme and private rented sector access scheme are closely integrated

We work with partner organisations to improve access to the private rented sector, eg housing associations, third sector organisations

We provide accurate information to individuals who approach the authority for information on housing about the private rented sector as a housing option

## PRACTICE EXAMPLES

The majority of authorities that responded to the baseline questionnaire have private rented sector access schemes in place or being developed. Some are in-house local authority schemes (eg Carmarthen, Neath Port Talbot), some operated by housing associations (eg Cardiff, Rhondda Cynon Taf) and some by third sector organisations (eg Gwynedd, Ynys Mon, Conwy).

Information about **Brighton and Hove's** use of shared tenancies in the private rented sector as an option for young people is online at

[www.communities.gov.uk/youthhomelessness/accommodation/moveon/furniture/moveoncasestudy16](http://www.communities.gov.uk/youthhomelessness/accommodation/moveon/furniture/moveoncasestudy16)

**Caerphilly County Borough Council's** Move-on Panel includes a PRS representative to provide an additional housing option for young people leaving supported housing.

Sue Cousins [cousis@caerphilly.gov.uk](mailto:cousis@caerphilly.gov.uk)

**The London Borough of Camden** has developed a flat share scheme for young people aged 18 to 24 as part of its move on pathway for this group. This scheme involves significant incentives for landlords.

[www.camden.gov.uk/ccm/navigation/housing/private-sector-housing/renting-your-property-through-camden-council/flat-share-scheme/?jsessionid=7BB19BCEA742D145AE503C9E6168A61D](http://www.camden.gov.uk/ccm/navigation/housing/private-sector-housing/renting-your-property-through-camden-council/flat-share-scheme/?jsessionid=7BB19BCEA742D145AE503C9E6168A61D)

Officers at **Carmarthenshire Council** are developing a self assessment tool to support officers to provide people in housing need with comprehensive advice on their housing options, including the private rented sector.

Val Brown

[VBrown@carmarthenshire.gov.uk](mailto:VBrown@carmarthenshire.gov.uk)

**Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council's** homelessness prevention service will be undertaking a systems review which will identify any gaps in relation to the private rented sector.

Rachel McCartney

[r.mccartney@neath.porttalbot.gov.uk](mailto:r.mccartney@neath.porttalbot.gov.uk)

**Newport City Council** works in partnership with Charter Housing to provide access to private rented sector through Charter Options

[www.charteroptions.co.uk](http://www.charteroptions.co.uk),  
[Simon.Rose@newport.gov.uk](mailto:Simon.Rose@newport.gov.uk),  
[andrea.gale@charterhousing.co.uk](mailto:andrea.gale@charterhousing.co.uk)

**Wrexham County Borough Council** has published a 12 page booklet providing advice on the various housing options available in the county, including the private rented sector. The booklet was produced by the Housing Strategy and Homelessness service and is online at

[www.wrexham.gov.uk/assets/pdfs/housing/documents/housing\\_options.pdf](http://www.wrexham.gov.uk/assets/pdfs/housing/documents/housing_options.pdf). The booklet

signposts people to information about lettings agents on the council's website [marc.williams@wrexham.gov.uk](mailto:marc.williams@wrexham.gov.uk)



## Area 10: The local authority takes opportunities to collaborate with other local authorities on work around the private rented sector

Our authority can demonstrate that:

We take opportunities to collaborate with other local authorities on work around the private rented sector

## PRACTICE EXAMPLES

**A-LIST** is a North West Accreditation and PRS partnership consisting of 36 local authorities, landlord associations and support agencies. It aims to improve standards in the PRS and raise awareness of landlord accreditation and licensing throughout the North West region of England.

[www.salford.gov.uk/alist.htm](http://www.salford.gov.uk/alist.htm)

**Blaenau Gwent, Monmouthshire and Torfaen County Borough Councils** work with neighbouring Gwent authorities to provide training and events for PRS landlords.

### **Caerphilly County Borough Council**

has developed a cross boundary New Lease Lettings scheme with Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council and United Welsh Housing Association.

Sue Cousins [cousis@caerphilly.gov.uk](mailto:cousis@caerphilly.gov.uk)

**Ceredigion County Council** has worked with neighbouring authorities on additional HMO licensing

Dave Saunders [daves@ceredigion.gov.uk](mailto:daves@ceredigion.gov.uk)

**Flintshire County Council** has worked with neighbouring authorities on loans and housing support

[David.Humphreys@flintshire.gov.uk](mailto:David.Humphreys@flintshire.gov.uk)

**Gwynedd, Denbighshire and Flintshire Councils** have jointly commissioned consultants to develop a range of loan options for private sector housing.

[GwilymRThomas@gwynedd.gov.uk](mailto:GwilymRThomas@gwynedd.gov.uk)

**Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council** has worked with neighbouring authorities on HMOs and accreditation and is working with Carmarthenshire Council on health impact assessments. Mark Thomas [m.thomas2@npt.gov.uk](mailto:m.thomas2@npt.gov.uk)

Examples of **cross-authority working across Wales** include:

- Landlord Accreditation Wales - [www.welshlandlords.org.uk](http://www.welshlandlords.org.uk)
- the roll out of the cardiffhousing website - [k.harris@cardiff.gov.uk](mailto:k.harris@cardiff.gov.uk)
- national networks such as the All Wales Chief Housing Officers' Panel, the National Homelessness Network and the Housing Technical Panel and the regional sub-groupings of these networks
- regional groups of revenues and benefits practitioners
- fire safety liaison meetings
- pan-Wales bond board meetings
- the private rented sector delivery group

## Local authority work with the private rented sector: Baseline October 2010 - Which authority is doing what?

The following information is drawn from questionnaires completed by local authorities in October 2010 as part of the WLGA project to develop a self-assessment toolkit for local authorities to use to assist in improving their work with private sector landlords. It is accurate at that time and subject to change. The information aims to enable authorities to share expertise as well as track their own progress.

### KEY FOR TABLE ON FOLLOWING PAGE

Blaenau Gwent	- BG	Denbighshire	- DB
Bridgend	- BRIDGE	Flintshire	- FL
Caerphilly	- CAER	Gwynedd	- GWY
Cardiff	- CARD	Merthyr Tydfil	- MT
Carmarthenshire	- CARM		
Ceredigion	- CERED	In development	- IN DEV
Conwy	- CON		

Activity	BG	BRIDGE	CAER	CARD	CARM	CERED	CON	DB	FL	GWY	MT
Corporate approach											
Corporate group that leads cross-authority work on PRS	N	IN DEV	N	Y	N	N	Y	Y	IN DEV	N	Y
Communication/ liaison with landlords											
PRS landlord forum	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
PRS landlord newsletter drafted by authority	N	N	N	N	Y	Y	N	Y	N	N	N
Use Landlord Accreditation Wales PRS landlord newsletter	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	N	Y	Y
Up to date information on webpages specifically for PRS landlords on council website	IN DEV	Y	Y	Y	Y but being updated	Y but being updated	IN DEV	Y	N	IN DEV	IN DEV
Council webpages signpost PRS landlords to <a href="http://www.welshlandlords.org.uk">www.welshlandlords.org.uk</a>	Y	Y	Y	Y	As above	Y	IN DEV	Y	N	N	IN DEV
Council webpages provide links to landlord support sites	IN DEV	Y	Y	Y	As above	N	IN DEV	Y	N	N	IN DEV
Up to date webpages specifically about PRS to be provided on roll out of <a href="http://www.cardiffhousing.co.uk">www.cardiffhousing.co.uk</a>	IN DEV	IN DEV	IN DEV	Y		N	IN DEV	IN DEV	N	N	IN DEV
PRS landlord training/ events developed by authority	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N	Y	N	Y	N	N

Activity	BG	BRIDGE	CAER	CARD	CARM	CERED	CON	DB	FL	GWY	MT
Local promotion to PRS landlords about training provided by Landlord Accreditation Wales	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y
Dedicated contact point within authority for PRS landlords	Y	IN DEV	N	N	N	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	N
Referencing service for landlords	N	N	N	Y			N	N	N		N
Comprehensive database of PRS landlords and lettings agents	N	N	N	IN DEV	Y	Y	IN DEV	Y	IN DEV	Y but not fully accurate	N
Licensing and accreditation											
Licensing (mandatory (M), additional (A) and/or selective (S))	M	M	M	M&A	M&A	M&A	M (A IN DEV)	M&A	M	M&A	M&A
Landlord accreditation through Landlord Accreditation Wales	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	IN DEV	Y	Y	Y	Y
Local landlord accreditation scheme in addition to Wales wide landlord scheme	N	N	N	N	Y	N	N	N	N	N	Y
Achieve 'good standard' in relation to Chartered Institute of Environmental Health standards	Not in all areas	Y	Y	Y	N	N	IN DEV	Y		N (not using this)	N

Activity	BG	BRIDGE	CAER	CARD	CARM	CERED	CON	DB	FL	GWY	MT
Improving quality of accommodation in the PRS											
Funding available for energy efficiency work in PRS properties	Y	N	N	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y	Y	N
Loans available to PRS landlords	N	N	Y	N	Y	N	N	Y	Y	IN DEV	N
Improving access to the PRS											
Private sector leasing scheme	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y but ending	Y	Y	Y	Y	IN DEV
Social lettings/private sector access scheme	IN DEV	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	IN DEV	Y	N	Y	IN DEV
Bond scheme	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y
Rent guarantee scheme	N	N	N	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	N	N
Non-refundable incentives provided to PRS landlords for taking 'nominations'	N	IN DEV	N	N	Y	Y but ending	N	N	N	Y	N
Growing the PRS											
Work to encourage owners of empty homes to improve and rent their properties	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y

Activity	BG	BRIDGE	CAER	CARD	CARM	CERED	CON	DB	FL	GWY	MT
Supporting PRS tenants											
Pre-tenancy work available for people who are going to go into PRS tenancies	Y	Y	N	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N
Tenants information pack	N	N	N	Y		Y	N	IN DEV	N	Y	N
Floating support available to PRS tenants	Y	Y nearly 45% of all floating support	Y	Y	D/K		Y	Y 46% leaving support were living in PRS	Y	Y	Y
Homelessness prevention											
Access to general homelessness prevention fund for PRS tenants	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Policies to prevent homelessness amongst PRS tenants including dedicated homelessness prevention fund	N	Y	Y	Y		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Mediation service accessible to PRS landlords and tenants	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y 14-15 year olds	Y

Activity	BG	BRIDGE	CAER	CARD	CARM	CERED	CON	DB	FL	GWY	MT
Housing benefit											
Fast track housing benefit processes for identified PRS landlords	N	N	N	N	N	N	Y	N	Y	N	N
100% spend on DHPs vs target in 2009-10 financial year	Y	N	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y		Y	Y
Year on year increase in DHP spend	Y	N	N	Y	D/K	Y	Y	Y		Y	Y
Work in progress to examine and tackle the impacts of housing benefit reform	Y	IN DEV	Y	Y	Y	Y	IN DEV	Y	Y	Y	Y
Work in progress to respond to/tackle proposed changes to LHA	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	IN DEV	Y	Y	Y	Y
Local credit union provides LHA accounts into which LHA is paid	Consid- ering	IN DEV	Y	N		Y	Y	N	IN DEV	N	IN DEV
Cross authority working											
Work with other local authorities on PRS issues	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	IN DEV	Y	Y	Y	N

**KEY FOR TABLE ON FOLLOWING PAGE**

Monmouthshire	- MON	Torfaen	- TOR
Neath Port-Talbot	- NPT	Vale of Glamorgan	- VALE
Newport	- NEW	Wrexham	- WREX
Pembrokeshire	- PEMB	Anglesey	- ANGL
Powys	- POW		
Rhondda Cynon Taf	- RCT		
Swansea	- SWAN	In development	- IN DEV



Activity	MON	NPT	NEW	PEMB	POW	RCT	SWAN	TOR	VALE	WREX	ANGL
Corporate approach											
Corporate group that leads cross-authority work on PRS	IN DEV	Y	N	N	N	Y	IN DEV	Y	N	Y	N
Communication/ liaison with landlords											
PRS landlord forum	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
PRS landlord newsletter drafted by authority	Y	N	N	N	N	Y	N	N	N	Y	N
Use Landlord Accreditation Wales PRS landlord newsletter	Y	Y		Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	N	Y
Up to date information on webpages specifically for PRS landlords on council website	Y	IN DEV	N	IN DEV	Y	Y	Y	Y	IN DEV	Y	Y
Council webpages signpost PRS landlords to <a href="http://www.welshlandlords.org.uk">www.welshlandlords.org.uk</a>	Y	IN DEV		IN DEV	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y
Council webpages provide links to landlord support sites	N	Y		IN DEV	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	N
Up to date webpages specifically about PRS to be provided on roll out of <a href="http://www.cardiffhousing.co.uk">www.cardiffhousing.co.uk</a>	Y	IN DEV	N	IN DEV	IN DEV	IN DEV	IN DEV	IN DEV	IN DEV	IN DEV	IN DEV

Activity	MON	NPT	NEW	PEMB	POW	RCT	SWAN	TOR	VALE	WREX	ANGL
Communication/ liaison with landlords											
PRS landlord training/events developed by authority	IN DEV	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	N	IN DEV	Y
Local promotion to PRS landlords about training provided by Landlord Accreditation Wales	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Dedicated contact point within authority for PRS landlords	Y	Y	N	Y	N	Partial	Y	Y	N	N	Y
Referencing service for landlords	N	Y		N	N		N	N	N	N	N
Comprehensive database of PRS landlords and lettings agents	IN DEV	Y	N	Y	IN DEV	Y	N	IN DEV	Y	IN DEV	Y
Licensing and accreditation											
Licensing (mandatory (M), additional (A) and/or selective (S))	M	M&A IN DEV	M	M	M	M&A	M&A	M &A IN DEV	M	M &A IN DEV	M
Landlord accreditation through Landlord Accreditation Wales	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Local landlord accreditation scheme in addition to Wales wide landlord scheme	N	Y		N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
Achieve 'good standard' in relation to Chartered Institute of Environmental Health standards	IN DEV	Y other than provision of newsletter	D/K	Y	Y	IN DEV		N	N	Y	

Activity	MON	NPT	NEW	PEMB	POW	RCT	SWAN	TOR	VALE	WREX	ANGL
Improving quality of accommodation in the PRS											
Funding available for energy efficiency work in PRS properties	Y (via external Sources)	Y (pilot in a renewal area)	N	N	Y	Y	Y	N	N	Y (in renewal areas only)	Y
Loans available to PRS landlords	Y (via House proud)	N	N	N	Y	N	Y	IN DEV	N	Y	N
Improving access to the PRS											
Private sector leasing scheme	Y	N	Y	N	Y	Y	N	IN DEV	Y	Y	Y
Social lettings/private sector access scheme	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	IN DEV	Y	IN DEV	IN DEV	Y	Y
Bond scheme	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N
Rent guarantee scheme	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
Non-refundable incentives provided to PRS landlords for taking 'nominations'	Y	N	Y	N	IN DEV	IN DEV	Y	N	N	N	N

Activity	MON	NPT	NEW	PEMB	POW	RCT	SWAN	TOR	VALE	WREX	ANGL
Growing the PRS											
Work to encourage owners of empty homes to improve and rent their properties	IN DEV	IN DEV		IN DEV	Y	Y	Y	Y	IN DEV	Y	Y
Supporting PRS tenants											
Pre-tenancy work available for people who are going to go into PRS tenancies	Y	IN DEV	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	N
Tenants information pack	N	IN DEV		N	N	N	Y for tenants in receipt of support	Y	IN DEV	Y	N
Floating support available to PRS tenants	Y	Y		Y	N	Y	Y	IN DEV	Y	N	Y
Homelessness prevention											
Access to general homelessness prevention fund for PRS tenants	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y		Y
Policies to prevent homelessness amongst PRS tenants including dedicated homelessness prevention fund	Y	Y		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y		Y
Mediation service accessible to PRS landlords and tenants		Y young people	Y	Y	Y	Y 16s & 17s only	Y	Y young people only	Y 16-24 year olds only		N

Activity	MON	NPT	NEW	PEMB	POW	RCT	SWAN	TOR	VALE	WREX	ANGL
Housing benefit											
Fast track housing benefit processes for identified PRS landlords	Y	Y (for all in person applications)		N	Y	N	N	N	Y	N	N
100% spend on DHPs vs target in 2009-10 financial year	Y	Y		Y	N	Y	Y	N	N (95%)	Y	Y
Year on year increase in DHP spend	Y	N		Y	N	N	Y	Y	N	Y	Y
Work in progress to examine and tackle the impacts of housing benefit reform	IN DEV	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N
Work in progress to respond to/tackle proposed changes to LHA	IN DEV	Y		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N
Local credit union provides LHA accounts into which LHA is paid	IN DEV	Y		N	N	Y	Y	IN DEV	N	N	N
Cross authority working											
Work with other local authorities on PRS issues	IN DEV	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N

## Websites

Accreditation Network UK

[www.anuk.org.uk](http://www.anuk.org.uk)

Association of Housing Advice Services

[www.ahas.org.uk](http://www.ahas.org.uk)

Association of Residential Lettings Agents

[www.arla.co.uk](http://www.arla.co.uk)

Communities and Local Government

[www.communities.gov.uk/housing/privaterentedhousing](http://www.communities.gov.uk/housing/privaterentedhousing)

Lacors

[www.lacors.gov.uk](http://www.lacors.gov.uk)

Landlord Accreditation Wales

[www.welshlandlords.org.uk](http://www.welshlandlords.org.uk)

Landlordzone

[www.landlordzone.co.uk](http://www.landlordzone.co.uk)

Local Government improvement and development - private rented sector

[www.idea.gov.uk/idk/core/page.do?pagelId=11901609#contents-12](http://www.idea.gov.uk/idk/core/page.do?pagelId=11901609#contents-12)

National youth homelessness scheme - move-on options

[www.communities.gov.uk/youthhomelessness/accommodation/moveon](http://www.communities.gov.uk/youthhomelessness/accommodation/moveon)

Private rented sector

Sharing knowledge to end homelessness

[www.privaterentedsector.org.uk](http://www.privaterentedsector.org.uk)

National Landlords Association

[www.landlords.org.uk](http://www.landlords.org.uk)

PRS access scheme toolkit

[www.privaterentedsector.org.uk/toolkit.asp](http://www.privaterentedsector.org.uk/toolkit.asp)

Tenants Services Authority - private rented sector positive practice group

[www.tenantservicesauthority.org/server/show/nav.14725](http://www.tenantservicesauthority.org/server/show/nav.14725)

Welsh Assembly Government

<http://new.wales.gov.uk/topics/housingandcommunity/housing/private/renting/?lang=en>

Welsh Housing Notice Board

[www.whnb.org.uk](http://www.whnb.org.uk)

Welsh Local Government Association

[www.wlga.gov.uk/english/housing](http://www.wlga.gov.uk/english/housing)

## Publications

*Discretionary Housing Payments: Best Practice Guide*

DWP, 2008

[www.dwp.gov.uk/docs/dhpguide.pdf](http://www.dwp.gov.uk/docs/dhpguide.pdf)

*Empty properties: making the most of the existing stock*

CIH Cymru/Shelter Cymru, 2009

[www.cih.org/cymru/policy/key9.htm](http://www.cih.org/cymru/policy/key9.htm)

*Giving Landlords What they Want*

Association of Housing Advice Services, 2010

[www.ahas.org.uk/downloads/AHAS%20Report%20Giving%20Landlords%20What%20They%20Want.pdf](http://www.ahas.org.uk/downloads/AHAS%20Report%20Giving%20Landlords%20What%20They%20Want.pdf)

*Good Practice Resource Pack for Working with Private Landlords*

Scottish Government, 2009

[www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/264899/0079340.pdf](http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/264899/0079340.pdf)

*Guide to empty dwelling management orders*

Empty Homes Agency, 2009

[www.emptyhomes.com/usefulresources/edmos.html](http://www.emptyhomes.com/usefulresources/edmos.html)

*Housing Associations, Homelessness*

*and the Private Rented Sector:*

*Tackling homelessness through better use of existing stock*

October, 2007

[www.campbelltickell.com/pdfs/prs\\_report.pdf](http://www.campbelltickell.com/pdfs/prs_report.pdf)

*Housing Benefit briefings*

WLGA, 2010

[www.wlga.gov.uk/english/housing-benefit](http://www.wlga.gov.uk/english/housing-benefit)

*Housing: the private rented sector*

Crisis, 2010

[www.crisis.org.uk/policy.php?fullitem=275](http://www.crisis.org.uk/policy.php?fullitem=275)

*How will changes to Local Housing*

*Allowance affect low-income*

*tenants in private rented housing?*

Cambridge Centre for Housing and Planning Research, 2010

[www.cchpr.landecon.cam.ac.uk/outputs/detail.asp?OutputID=234](http://www.cchpr.landecon.cam.ac.uk/outputs/detail.asp?OutputID=234)

*Impacts of Housing Benefit proposals: Changes to the Local Housing Allowance to be introduced in 2011-12*

DWP, 2010

[www.dwp.gov.uk/docs/impacts-of-hb-proposals.pdf](http://www.dwp.gov.uk/docs/impacts-of-hb-proposals.pdf)

*Investment in the UK private rented sector*

HM Treasury, 2010

[www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/d/consult\\_investment\\_ukprivaterentedsector.pdf](http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/d/consult_investment_ukprivaterentedsector.pdf)

*Key principles for private rented sector access schemes: guidance for those assisting homeless and vulnerable people to access private rented accommodation*

Crisis, 2010

[http://prs.c4cpu.co.uk/key\\_principles.asp](http://prs.c4cpu.co.uk/key_principles.asp)

*Low income working households in the private rented sector*

DWP, 2010

[http://research.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd5/report\\_abstracts/rr\\_abstracts/rra\\_698.asp](http://research.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd5/report_abstracts/rr_abstracts/rra_698.asp)

*New directions for renting: a new direction for the private rented sector*

Crisis/NLA

[www.landlords.org.uk/pdf/free/newdirectionsforrenting.pdf](http://www.landlords.org.uk/pdf/free/newdirectionsforrenting.pdf)

*Older people's experiences of renting privately*

Age UK, 2010

<http://policy.helptheaged.org.uk/NR/rdonlyres/C39B08DE-B437-4C62-94F2-B4AB695A0AB1/0/OPexpofrentingprivatelyFINAL.pdf>

*Private rented extra care: a new market?*

Housing LIN, 2010

[www.dhcarenetworks.org.uk/\\_library/Resources/Housing/Support\\_materials/Factsheets/Factsheet\\_32\\_PRS.pdf](http://www.dhcarenetworks.org.uk/_library/Resources/Housing/Support_materials/Factsheets/Factsheet_32_PRS.pdf)

*Promoting investment in private rented housing supply: International policy comparisons*

CLG, 2010

[www.communities.gov.uk/documents/housing/pdf/1759530.pdf](http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/housing/pdf/1759530.pdf)

*Providing the solution: improving the private rented sector as an option for resolving housing need in Wales*

Shelter Cymru, 2006

[www.sheltercymru.org.uk/library/research.aspx?Parentid=5&table=levelone&pageid=6&subcat=23](http://www.sheltercymru.org.uk/library/research.aspx?Parentid=5&table=levelone&pageid=6&subcat=23)

*Renting in the downturn: assessing the impact of the economic downturn on renters and the rented sectors*

Cambridge Centre for Housing and Planning Research and London School of Economics

[www.cchpr.landecon.cam.ac.uk/outputs/detail.asp?OutputID=209](http://www.cchpr.landecon.cam.ac.uk/outputs/detail.asp?OutputID=209)

*Settled housing solutions in the private rented sector*

Communities and Local Government, 2008

*Taking the strain: the private rented sector in the recession*

Shelter, 2009

[http://england.shelter.org.uk/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0009/229725/Taking\\_the\\_strain\\_PRS\\_during\\_recession.pdf](http://england.shelter.org.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0009/229725/Taking_the_strain_PRS_during_recession.pdf)

*Targeting the private rented sector: guidance for local authorities*

Energy Savings Trust

[www.energysavingtrust.org.uk/business/Business/Local-Authorities/Private-sector-housing/Private-rented-sector](http://www.energysavingtrust.org.uk/business/Business/Local-Authorities/Private-sector-housing/Private-rented-sector)



*Tenure Trends in the UK Housing System: Will the private rented sector continue to grow?*

BSHF, 2010

[www.bshf.org/published-information/publication.cfm?lang=00&thePubID=46C4A5EA-15C5-F4C0-99C662FE48B048B9](http://www.bshf.org/published-information/publication.cfm?lang=00&thePubID=46C4A5EA-15C5-F4C0-99C662FE48B048B9)

*The landlord handbook*

ANUK/Lacors, 2009

[www.anuk.org.uk/Information/LandlordHandbook/default.asp](http://www.anuk.org.uk/Information/LandlordHandbook/default.asp)

*The UK private rented sector: its contribution and potential (Rugg Review)*

Centre for Housing Policy, 2008

[www.york.ac.uk/inst/chp/publications/PDF/prsreviewweb.pdf](http://www.york.ac.uk/inst/chp/publications/PDF/prsreviewweb.pdf)

*The UK private rented sector as a source of affordable accommodation*

Joseph Rowntree Foundation, 2010

[www.jrf.org.uk/publications/private-rented-sector-affordable-accommodation](http://www.jrf.org.uk/publications/private-rented-sector-affordable-accommodation)

*Ways and Means: Local authorities' work with the private rented sector*

Chartered Institute of Housing, 2006

[www.cih.org/policy/WaysAndMeans.pdf](http://www.cih.org/policy/WaysAndMeans.pdf)

## APPENDIX 1: STEERING GROUP MEMBERS

Lee Cecil, National Landlords Association

JJ Costello, Shelter Cymru

Sue Finch, Welsh Local Government Association

Mike Friel, Cardiff Council

Steve Hancock, City and County of Swansea

Yvonne Hewit, Denbighshire County Council

David Humphreys, Flintshire County Council

Claire Jones, Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council

Matthew Lord, Cardiff Council

Glesni Owen, Denbighshire County Council

Robert Owen, Bridgend County Borough Council

Jenny Prince, Vale of Glamorgan Council

Anne Rowland, Landlord Accreditation Wales

Martin Whatty, City and County of Swansea

Fiona Wilkins, Caerphilly County Borough Council

Gareth Williams, Carmarthenshire County Council

Kenyon Williams, Caerphilly County Borough Council

## APPENDIX 2: PRO-FORMA REPRESENTATION

[text in square brackets to be inserted relating to the individual authority]

### Content

- Why working with the private rented sector is important
- Some local facts about the private rented sector
- Some facts about the local housing market
- Where we are as an authority re our work with private rented sector landlords
- Priority areas for improvement

### Why working with the private rented sector is important (1)

- 12% of homes across Wales are in the private rented sector, a higher percentage than council housing
- [X]% of homes in [y] authority are in the private rented sector
- The sector is likely to grow
- The private rented sector has an important role in meeting housing need for a variety of groups – some vulnerable, some not

### Why working with the private rented sector is important (2)

- common perception that most private rented sector landlords do not look after their properties or tenants well, but there are many landlords who provide good quality accommodation and manage it effectively
- ensuring a good quality and well-managed private rented sector has potential to deliver on range of local govt priorities (and to aid value for money)

### Why working with the private rented sector is important (3)

A good quality and well-managed private rented sector will contribute to corporate objectives on:

- Health and social care
- Tackling child poverty
- Sustainability
- Regeneration
- Meeting housing need
- Preventing and tackling homelessness
- Supporting people to live independently in their own home

### Some local facts about the private rented sector

- No. of PRS homes = [a]
- No. of landlords and lettings agents = [b]
- Amount of HB paid out on PRS lets last financial year = [c]
- No. of enforcement actions in PRS last financial year = [d]
- No. of homelessness cases where duty discharged into the PRS = [e]
- No. of cases where homelessness prevented through use of the PRS = [f]

### Some facts about the local housing market

- Average house price/earning ratio = [a]
- No. of households on waiting list/common housing register = [b]
- No. of homelessness presentations last financial year = [c]
- No. of lettings in the social housing sector last financial year = [d]
  - Private rented sector has a clear role to play

### Where we are as an authority (1)

The PRS at a corporate level

[Summary info from initial diagnostic]

Working across departments and teams

[Summary info from initial diagnostic]

Resourcing work with the PRS

[Summary info from initial diagnostic]

### Where we are as an authority (2)

- Knowledge of the local PRS  
[Summary info from initial diagnostic]
- Communication with PRS landlords  
[Summary info from initial diagnostic]
- Support for tenants to sustain PRS tenancies  
[Summary info from initial diagnostic]
- Support for PRS landlords  
[Summary info from initial diagnostic]

### Where we are as an authority (3)

- Improving the quality of the PRS  
[Summary info from initial diagnostic]
- Improving access to the PRS  
[Summary info from initial diagnostic]
- Collaboration with other local authorities  
[Summary info from initial diagnostic]